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## GREEN WEDGES, RURAL ACCESS AREAS AND GREEN LINKS

### POLICY EN10

**PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN WEDGES AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP UNLESS IT WOULD NOT: -**

- A. BE DISCORDANT WITH THE PREDOMINANTLY OPEN/GREEN NATURE OF A GREEN WEDGE BY REASON OF APPEARANCE OR USE; OR**
- B. REDUCE THE PHYSICAL SEPARATION BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS; OR**
- C. COMPROMISE AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY OPERATIONS, RECREATION USE OR WILDLIFE VALUE IN A GREEN WEDGE; OR**
- D. IMPAIR PUBLIC ACCESS TO A GREEN WEDGE.**

- 3.31 "Green wedges" are extensive areas of predominantly open/green spaces which flank large settlements and act as buffers between built-up areas and prevent their coalescence, as on the fringe of Northampton, and as settings for established landscape features, such as the countryside setting for Daventry Country Park. The District Council considers that their greatest value is as undeveloped open space areas for recreation, as agricultural land, as land of high ecological or landscape importance and/or as land providing separation between existing settlements. In all cases, their open and undeveloped character helps to give identity to, or retain identity of, settlements and landscape features. These identities are considered important to sustain. It should be noted that valid minerals planning consents exist on sites within the green wedge. These date from the 1950s and relate to ironstone extraction but also permit the extraction of overlying minerals. The Environment Act 1995 introduced new requirements for the review and updating of the old mineral planning permissions. The ironstone permission at Pitsford and Boughton has been classified as an Active Phase 1 site. Land and mineral owners of Active Phase 1 sites must submit new conditions to the County Council, as the Minerals Planning Authority.
- 3.32 As well as protecting green wedges, the District Council will seek to enhance them and improve access to them so that the public have both attractive and useable countryside and parks near to their homes.
- 3.33 With increased pressure for development on the fringes of urban areas, therefore, it is prudent to define these open/green spaces in this Plan so that developers and the public are aware of the District Council's desire to protect them from inappropriate development and can plan investment accordingly. Green wedges are identified on the Proposals Map.
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